A Message for the Black Community

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Boston's Alternative Newspaper With a Conscience Since 1992 - www.homelessempowerment.org

NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY 2009 Be proactive in your sexual health, get screened on June 27

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> ROEDER? FELLOW FANATIC TO SEE YOU...

Spare Change News

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his past Saturday, Spare Change News held an open house in commemoration of a rather anomalous anniversary—17 years. Since I've been with the organization for a relatively short period of time, this number (representative of longevity) seemed to carry an especial gravity for me. As I gazed at the reprint of the first issue of SCN whose content-rich pages adorned two separate walls in Cambridge Old Baptist's basement, I marveled at the meaning that such an experiment as this newspaper represents. I was struck by the quality of the first issue—at 20 pages long and covering local and national stories across a range of topics, the scope of this introductory journalistic foray must have far surpassed what was contemporarily expected of it.

The Spare Change open house epitomized a pleasant day of socialization for many of us connected to the newspaper and to HEP. Staff, volunteers, vendors, and a few members of the public gathered here at the SCN headquarters to chat, network, brainstorm ideas, and enjoy the scrumptious fare donated by Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, and Quebrada Bakery in Arlington. On a personal level, I must express gratitude to everyone who offered suggestions about the editorial platform of SCN, especially to those vendors who shared their thoughts.

Yet in spite of the overarching positive atmosphere of the open house, I was disappointed to not see more SCN readers intermingle with those in the ranks of our organization. I had anticipated with excitement the prospect of connecting personally with some of you, and had looked forward to receiving your comments and criticisms. I did, however, enjoy the opportunity to speak with one member of the public in particular, an individual who has experienced homelessness and has since become an advocate for shelter reform.

This person, a man named Dan who is originally from Washington, DC, made several suggestions for Spare Change based on his familiarity with the DC-based street paper, Street Sense. One of his recommendations particularly resonated with me that day, considering my desire to connect with more of our readers. Dan told me about a practice that Street Sense enacts, which invites readers to pose questions about homelessness that will later be responded to by a homeless or formerly homeless person.

As an evolution from the Street Sense for

mat for reader engagement, I and the rest of the SCN staff would like to invite you, the reader, to participate in a "call & response" free-form dialogue. This conversation will take place in a web-based forum via message thread postings on a forthcoming SCN Facebook page. You can simply add Spare Change News as a friend, then read, respond to, or create message threads based on content of recent issues, or on the issues that you see unfolding on the street. Use this venue to offer suggestions, criticisms, information, or ask questions to elicit the truth about homelessness.

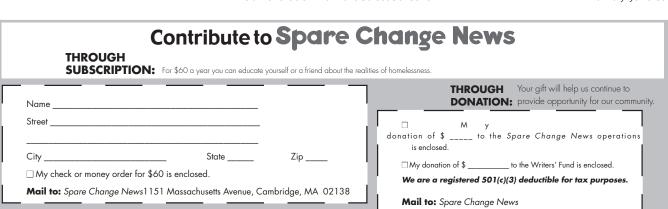
Our Facebook-based Spare Change Newsthread will offer a platform for readers to socialize online with others who share similar interests. Further, the page will enable you to get more personally acquainted with the experience of homelessness without actually living through it—through the thread you'll be able to interact with those who have. By creating a Spare Change community of friends online, by networking with one another and exchanging information, we can truly effect real world change.

If you already buy our paper, we hope that you'll get involved with the Newsthread. Interesting posts and/or their responses will potentially be published in hardcopy in SCN—another opportunity for you to have your voice heard. For the moment our website is undergoing reforms, but it should be up and running by the time the next issue is published. When it is, look for a link to our Facebook page, or simply search for Spare Change on Facebook itself and send us a friend request. As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Spare Change was founded in 1992 by a group of homeless people and a member of Boston Jobs with Peace. The Mission and Goals of Spare Change are:

"To present, by our own example, that homeless and economically disadvantaged people, with the proper resources, empowerment, opportunity, and encouragement are capable of creating change for ourselves in society."

- 1. The publication will be an organizing tool for the homeless community.
- 2. The publication will create a dialogue between the haves and have-nots.
- 3. The publication will be a vehicle to promote facts and destroy the myths about homelessness.
- 4. The publication will promote opportunities for the growth and economic development of disadvantaged persons.









Diminished Protections for Central Square Homeless: Cambridge Police Relocation

Shedrick M. Gavin Spare Change News

his past spring, the Cambridge Police Department Headquarters relocated from its old location at 5 Western Ave. in Central Square to a new site in East Cambridge, at 125 Sixth St. The move has raised concerns for some area residents, especially those from vulnerable populations who see the relocation as a sign that local authorities don't care about their well being.

Jenny Tooley, a Boston native who hangs out in Central Square, has been homeless for 8 months. Tooley's current situation began when her father, a single parent who is also disabled from an accident he suffered on the job, lost his Chelsea home in foreclosure. The family was subsequently forced out on the street, Jenny's elderly grandmother included

"I understand pain," Tooley said, describing her experience as a young homeless woman. "It makes me cry sometimes. I just don't understand why [God] put me in that type of situation. What have I done to him to make him hate me?"

Tooley is one of the local homeless individuals who seek refuge in Central Square. Now, due to a recent attack against her and the indifferent treatment she reported to have received from Cambridge police officers, she no longer feels safe in the area.

"He hit me in my face," says Tooley, describing the assault by a man she called Blue Smooth. "Then he pushed me down and kicked me in front of the CVS." An admitted crack addict, Tooley explained, "Smooth said I owed him money. He threatened me and grabbed my arm. He wouldn't let me leave."

Tooley claims that there were at least four police standing in front of the CVS but that

they did nothing to stop the beating. "They didn't even turn around and look," she said. The incident reportedly occurred in the middle of the afternoon on a Wednesday. Ms. Tooley says that after being ignored by the law enforcement officers present, she reported the crime to another Cambridge policeman who was near the fire station on Massachusetts Ave. "He told me I needed to walk all the way to East Cambridge if I wanted to file a restraining order. But it's too far away," she explained.

Jenny Tooley is not alone in her frustrations about injustice. Langston Rivers, a local homeless man, shares the same concerns. He said that the issues of homeless people are not treated with the same degree of seriousness as those of everyone else. Rivers believes that the move by the Cambridge Police Department is a sign that they do not care about what happens to poor people.

On one side of Central Square is Harvard,

which has its own police department, and on the other side is Kendall/MIT, which also has a separate law enforcement and safety agency. Now, in the heart of the city, there is only an empty building where the Cambridge Police Headquarters once stood.

Many Central Square locals wonder if crime in the area will escalate as a result of the Police Department relocation. For many in the homeless community, the law enforcement headquarters was the only real established safety net for them. Now any sense of security they had is gone.

"I can't get used to it not being there," Rivers said as he reiterated his concerns about safety issues as he sat in front of the post office across from City Hall, asking for change. "The government needs to foster a dialogue on poor people."

Rivers understood the move as having potentially serious implications for the future. "It's a very bad sign," he said.

Project Bread supports 'food and fun' for Cambridge kids this summer

Nearly \$200,000 in statewide grants help families cope with the economic crisis

Text by Project Bread

hen school is out, kids who rely on free or reduced-price school meals need a safe place to go where they can have a healthy meal and some summer fun. That's why Project Bread is giving \$198,950 in incentive grants to local Summer Food Service Programs across the state with \$2,500 of that earmarked for Camp Big Adventure at Morse Community School.

"It's all part of an effort to help families cope with the economic crisis and keep their kids eating, growing, socializing, and learning," said Project Bread Director Ellen Parker.

The Summer Food Service Program is funded by the USDA and administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. However, these programs need supplemental funds to expand and provide the kind of programming that really attracts local kids and keeps them coming over the summer. In Cambridge,

Project Bread's \$2,500 can be used to acquire food storage and preparation equipment, sports or arts and crafts equipment, even books — whatever it takes to enrich the programming and increase the number of children a program serves.

"Offering the Summer Food Program at Camp Big Adventure will be a tremendous asset to Cambridge families, particularly during these tough economic times," said Stan Rogers, program director. "Supplementing food costs by the USDA will keep our programming affordable for families and the community as a whole." Summer Food Programs in Cambridge are expected to serve over 38,900 meals to Cambridge children this summer at nearly 30 neighborhood meal sites.

Project Bread estimates that more than 51,000 low-income children across the state will benefit from these programs this year. "In these historically hard times, we want parents to take advantage of these free summer food and fun programs," said Parker. "Some programs provide a breakfast and lunch, some a lunch and nutritious snack — each is a little different — but whatever the structure is, it definitely saves the family the cost of those meals, which can really add up over the course of the summer. Parents can then apply that savings to a healthy evening meal for the entire family."

Programs typically start at the end of

June and run through mid August. No registration is necessary and sites are open to all children age 18 and under. "We're an antihunger organization that does not want to see kids sitting at home hungry and bored over the summer because school is out," continued Parker. "So we've made an investment in bringing food and fun together in as many neighborhood programs as possible that provide a really helpful service to family life."

Project Bread is providing a total of 63 summer grants, amounting to \$198,950. The support is being given to a wide range of local organizations, including Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers, schooland playground-based programs, church programs, and YMCAs. Communities receiving Summer Food Service Program Incentive Grants from Project Bread include: Barnstable, Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Cheshire, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Framingham, Haverhill, Hyannis, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Methuen, New Bedford, Orange, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Salem, Somerville, Springfield, Taunton, Turner's Falls, Waltham, Wareham, Webster, Westfield, Woburn, and Worcester.

For a complete listing of locations, dates, and times, parents and guardians are urged to call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333 or visit www.meals4kids.org.

New programs are forming in Cambridge right now. A complete list of programs will be released after July 1, 2009.

ABOUT PROJECT BREAD

As the state's leading anti-hunger organization, Project Bread is dedicated to alleviating, preventing, and ultimately ending hunger in Massachusetts. Through The Walk for Hunger, the oldest continual pledge walk in the country, Project Bread provides millions of dollars each year in privately donated funds to 400 emergency food programs in 128 communities statewide. Project Bread also supports systematic solutions that prevent hunger in children and that provide food to families in natural, everyday settings. For more information, visit www.projectbread.org.

ABOUT THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The Summer Food Service Program is federally funded through the USDA and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. All meals are free to children 18 years and under without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap. No registration or sign-up is necessary. Project Bread's goal is to increase the number of young people using these programs by providing grants that enable directors to set up new, convenient locations around town or improve the quality of food. Children who have access to nutritious meals throughout the summer return to school in the fall ready to learn. Project Bread's hunger prevention work is supported by the Massachusetts Legislature.





NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY: Mark your calendar for June 27th

David J. Jefferson Spare Change News

hatever your age, gender, and sexual orientation, if you are sexually active the box on your calendar for June 27th should be boldly circled. This date, an upcoming Saturday, marks National HIV Testing Day, an annual campaign realized in localities across the country, which was ideated, planned, and implemented by the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA). The focus of this event is to encourage all sexually active individuals—especially those who are at high risk for HIV—to engage in voluntary counseling and testing.

Such proactive engagement in your own sexual health is important whether or not you are considered part of a population at highrisk for contracting HIV. Voluntarily seeking counseling fosters education about sexually transmitted disease, which has benefits for you as well as your partner or partners. To take an active role in your sexual well being, participation in the vast support network that organizations such as Victory Programs of Boston represent is recommended. For people diagnosed with HIV, engaging in counseling helps to protect their own health and that of their partners. For those who have not been diagnosed, education encourages them to develop healthy practices that will help to continue to ward off infection.

The date June 27th has become etched in the national HIV consciousness since NAPWA began the National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) in 1995. On this day each year, local organizations engage with their communities to promote prevention and early diagnosis through testing. This year in Boston, Victory Programs is spearheading an effort to raise awareness about NHTD and about healthy sexual practices generally. This organization is not solely concerned with HIV; rather, its mission statement describes its effort to "Open doors to recovery, hope, and community, to individuals and families facing homelessness, addiction, and other chronic illnesses." Victory Programs, headquartered in Roxbury, "Specializes in community-based urban programming, working with people who are homeless and may have substance use issues, many of whom are also dealing with HIV, Hepatitis C, or mental illness," according to information published by the organization.

The efforts of NHTD are critically important. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and as stated on NAPWA's website, an estimated 250,000 of the one million people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States are unaware of their status. As such, it is crucial that if you have not recently been tested and are sexually active, that you take advantage of the following resources on June 27th.

CENTRO LATINO

On Wednesday, June 24 Centro Latino, Inc will be holding their 2nd Annual Family Health Fair in observance of the National HIV Counseling and Testing Day. The goals of the event are to increase the public awareness and knowledge about AIDS/HIV, encourage at-risk individuals to receive voluntary HIV counseling and testing and provide information about various community health resources.

In addition to free, anonymous and confidential HIV counseling and testing, free health screenings for blood pressure and diabetes and health information, the event will provide family entertainment, refreshments, giveaways, face painting, games, and music, etc.

This event will be held at Centro Latino's parking lot from 1 pm to 4:00 pm. We are expecting attendance of 200 plus participants. All services are free of charge.

267 Broadway Chelsea.

HEALTHCARE FOR THE HOMELESS

Health Care for the Homeless will be holding 5 health fairs in conjunction with NHTD. Services include: HIV counseling, testing and referrals, Hepatitis C screening, Hepatitis A and B vaccinations, and STD testing. All services are free of charge. Contact person is Georgia Thomas 857-654-1636. Events locations:

- 1. Casa Esperanza at 245 Eustis St., Roxbury June 22 from 8:30 am to 12 noon.
- 2. Pine Street Inn for Men at 444 Harrison
- Ave., Boston June 22 from 4 pm to 7 pm.
- 3. New England Veteran's Shelter at 17 Court St., Boston June 23 from 8:30 am to 12 noon.
- 4. Hope Found, (formerly the Shattuck Shelter) at 170 Morton St., Jamaica Plain June 24 from 4 pm to 6 pm.
- 5. St. Francis House at 39 Boylston St., Boston June 25 from 7:30 am to 10:30 am.

FENWAY COMMUNITY HEALTH

Fenway Community Health has two NHTD events. On June 24, there will be a walk-in clinic at their new location 1340 Boylston St., Boston from 12 noon to 6 pm. Services include: rapid HIV testing, Hepatitis B and C screening, Hepatitis A and B vaccinations, chair massages and light refreshments. Their second event is June 26 from 11 am to 3 pm at the Multicultural AIDS Coalition, 31 Health St. 4th floor Jamaica Plain. Services include rapid HIV testing and Hepatitis C screening. All services are free of charge.

PROJECT SHINE

On June 26 from 10 am to 3 pm, Project SHINE at East Boston Neighborhood Health Center 10 Gove St., East Boston will have an informational table at the main entrance of the health center. There will be refreshments and giveaways and a sign up sheet for rapid HIV testing. Rapid testing for HIV will take place inside the building at Practice 5 of the health center. Services are free of charge.

HOW TO USE A MALE CONDOM/CONDOM TIPS

- 1. Check expiration date on package. If the condom is not past its expiration date, open the package carefully. Teeth, fingernails and sharp objects can puncture the condom, so it's best not to use them to open the package.
- 2. Put the condom on as soon as the penis is hard and erect. If the penis is uncircumcised, pull back the foreskin before rolling the condom over the erect penis. Pinch the top of the condom between your thumb and first finger to keep air out. Be sure to leave about ½ inch of room at the tip. This space leaves room for the semen, so the condom won't break during ejaculation
- 3. Hold the condom against the head of the penis. Use your other hand to carefully unroll the condom over the penis, all the way down to the base
- 4. After ejaculation, take the penis out while it is still hard. Hold the rim of the condom around the base of the penis as it is pulled out.
- 5. Be sure the penis is away from your partner's body before you remove the condom. Throw away the used condom. Never use a condom more than one time. Never use more than one condom at a time.

Using extra lubrication helps reduce condom breakage. Use a water based lubrication only on latex condoms. Oil based lubrications increases condom breakage.

Only latex and polyurethane condoms protect against HIV and STD's. Sheep skin condoms protect against pregnancy only—they are not effective against HIV and STD's. Do not use latex condoms if you or your partners are allergic to latex. Use a

polyurethane condom like Avanti's, made by Durex. Condoms coated with nonoxynol-9 should not be used if you are protecting against HIV. Nonoxynol-9 is caustic and causes tissue abrasions, which increases your risk of HIV infection.

There are many condom brands, styles, shapes and even flavors. Experiment to find the type or brand that works best for you and your partners.

HOW TO USE A FEMALE CONDOM

The Female Condom is a pouch made of polyurethane, which fits inside a woman's vagina. It has a soft ring on each end. The outer ring stays on the outside of the vagina and partly covers the labia (lips.) The inner ring fits inside the vagina, somewhat like a diaphragm. This ring holds the female condom in place.

- 1. Insert the female condom any time before the penis touches the vagina. Add lubricant to the inside of the condom, and squeeze together the inner ring.
- 2. Place the inner ring and pouch inside the vagina.
- 3. With your index finger, push the inner ring as far into the vagina as it will go. The outer ring stays outside of the vagina.
- 4. Guide the penis into the vagina making sure the outer ring stays in place over the labia.
- 5. Remove the condom before standing up. Squeeze and twist the outer ring to keep the sperm inside the pouch. Pull the condom out gently. Throw away in a trash can. Do not re-use. Do not use any other condom with the female condom.









Arthur Griffin: Profile of a Homeless Veteran

Adam Sennott Spare Change News

According to the New England Shelter For Homeless Veterans website, more the 500,000 veterans experience homelessness every year, and one of every four adult homeless males served in the U.S Armed Services at some point. For more information about the New England Shelter For Homeless Veterans, or to make a contribution please visit http://www.nechv.org/

hether it's mastering Spanish or interpreting Poe, each class he takes is one step past his memories of Vietnam, and another closer to his goal of working with the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Arthur Griffin, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Army for 23 years and current resident at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans, attends Bunker Hill Community College with the dream of someday reaching out to other veterans through the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Griffin, originally from Vermont, enlisted in the military as an escape from a difficult childhood. "I joined the Army when I turned 17. I didn't have a very good home life," Griffin said. "I was in orphanages, group homes and things like that. I spent a year in reform school. So joining the Army was kind of my way out of that."

In 1969, immediately following his 18th birthday, the Army shipped Griffin to Vietnam. "I went to Vietnam as soon as I turned 18. I was in Vietnam 17 days after my 18th birthday," Griffin said. "I was in Vietnam for 19 months. I spent 19 months and I was a radio operator in an infantry

During his time in the jungles of Vietnam, Griffin experienced his share of the myriad horrors and atrocities that accompany war. "Well....Same crap every infantry soldier goes through," Griffin said of his time in Vietnam. "A lot of firefights, a lot of rocket attacks. We were rocketed a lot."

However, the hardest thing that Mr. Griffin says he experienced during his tour of duty was seeing the many people around him die, and not knowing if he would make it out himself. "Saw some good friends die," Griffin remembered sadly. "I felt that my destiny was to die in Vietnam. At that time I really felt that I wasn't going to make it out of Vietnam."

But Griffin eventually did make it out, though circumstances were fundamentally different from when he had left. Like many of the other soldiers who were lucky enough to return with him, coming home was just the beginning of a new fight. "When I did make it out, I mean I was kind of lost, you know. I didn't have any goals or anything," Griffin said. "I got into drugs, and drinking, partying. Not taking life serious."

One of the biggest difficulties facing Griffin and many other soldiers upon returning from Vietnam was the lack of a support system as he tried to re-establish himself in society. Like many soldiers, Griffin lost contact with his companions with whom he had served after the war.

"[The Vietnam War] wasn't like the Second World War where everybody got trained together and went to battle together and stayed together." Griffin said about staying in contact with members of his infantry. "You went over there by yourself, and basically you were by yourself," he continued. "By the time you're over there a while and you see people that you care about die, then you get to a point where you don't want to make friends."

During his first year and a half back in the U.S., Griffin would work many different jobs in an effort to support himself. "I just went from job to job, you know," Griffin said. "A bunch of dead end jobs."

After initial employment in a plethora of different jobs, Griffin eventually found an opportunity in construction. He soon earned a far more important title, as a husband and father. "I traveled with the carnival for a while," Griffin said. "Then I got a job in construction, got married, and my wife was pregnant."

With a family to take care of but still without a stable career, Griffin went back to the one thing he knew, the Army. "That's why I went back in the Army, because I got laid off for the winter from the construction job, my wife was preg-



Arthur Griffin

nant. I said well, I have got to do something."

While Griffin was forced to go back into the Army in order to provide for his family, he was able to avoid combat. "When I went back into the Army I went back in as a radio repairman," Griffin said. "So I did that for probably ten years. I worked my way up to an electronics technician. Basically I worked in maintenance, maintenance or signal companies. Mostly maintenance, we did all the electronics

Griffin's military career would bring him to the far corners of the planet, and allow him to experience the world. Griffin listed the many places where he has been stationed: "I have been to Turkey, I have been to the Egyptian dessert. I have been to Nicaragua; and Honduras, Guatemala."

However, Griffin spent most of his time in Germany. "I spent a total of four tours in Germany," Griffin said. "Twenty three years I spent four different tours in Germany that amounted to about ten years."

"I liked Germany because there was a lot to see there and a lot to do. I learned to speak the language, and got along good with the German people," Griffin said. "I enjoyed being in Germany. Not only that, being in Germany your kind of like in the middle of Europe, so I got to go to France a lot, and to the Netherlands, and down to Austria, Luxemburg."

After 23 years and much travel, Griffin's military career came to an end. He then returned home and eventually found work with some childhood friends. "Well when I got out of the Army again I was in a lot of dead end jobs that didn't last," Griffin said. "Then I got a job with this company that I was really familiar with. I knew the people who owned it." In his new work, Griffin again found opportunity

through dedication. "I started working with them managing a convenience store and gas station, and worked my way up," Griffin said. "In two years time I was the district manager where I oversaw a chain of convenience store and gas stations. They had like 30 stores all around Vermont."

In a demonstration of his ambitious aspirations, Griffin then embarked on a career in city politics, beginning as a member of the PTA at his son's school. Griffin explained, "Well, it was one of those weird things where my son came home with a note from school when they were looking for volunteers to be on the Nominating Committee for the PTA." For Griffin, involvement in local politics also meant more familial participation. "I decided that was a good way to get involved with the school. It was right after I got out of the Army and I wanted to take a more active part with my kids. I volunteered to be on that nominating committee and I met these people, two of them were on the school board," Griffin said of how he was first introduced to the board. "They really liked me. We got along good and everything and they kind of pressured me into running for the school board."

Though Griffin initially declined, he eventually caved and ran for election. "I finally just gave in and my thought was, just to get these people off my back I will run," Griffin said with a smile. "I will do the election thing, and I won't get elected then they will leave me alone. But, as it turned out I got elected."

After joining the school board Griffin decided to take his political career a step further. "I was on the school board, then I ran for Board of Alderman," Griffin said. "The Board of Alderman is like a committee that oversees the city council. Not all cities have a Board of Alderman, our city did. In Vermont most cities have a Board of Alderman."

Yet while Griffin had made a relatively smooth transition from the military into dual careers in management and politics, his life soon took a tragic turn. "I got into a fight with a guy and almost killed him," Griffin said. "I ended up going to prison, attempted manslaughter."

Griffin told the story of a man and his brother, both of whom were drunk, who he encountered during a night out. According to Griffin the man in question had a reputation for bullying people, and apparently he provoked Griffin at some point in the evening. Instead of walking away, Griffin allowed his military training to take over.

Griffin elaborated on the incident: "I acted on instinct. It wasn't anything I thought about or planned or anything. It was just an incident that happened. A guy attacked me in a parking lot, and I reacted. Unfortunately, the way I reacted had its consequences," Griffin said, alluding to the apparently unanticipated vigor with which he responded to the provocation.

Griffin spent the next three years in prison, an ordeal that he says destroyed his family. "It kind of changed my whole life," he said of the experience. "My wife divorced me while I was in prison." Griffin said that after he was released it took him 10 years to rediscover his place in the world. "When I got out of prison I just started wandering around from one place to another," he said. "Basically, that's what I have been doing for the last ten years—just wandering around."

During this decade-long period, Griffin traveled the country, bounced from job to job and struggled to find a new identity for himself. Among the places Griffin lived during these ten vears are Honolulu, Tennessee, San Francisco, Florida, and eventually Boston. "I came to Boston from Florida in 2006. I worked out of labor halls," said Griffin. "It's just day labor, where you work the day, and you get paid at the end of the day. You do different things. In Florida it's mostly construction. But up here, here in Boston, like Labor Ready, they hire people for the convention centers and stuff like that."

Though it took a decade, Griffin did eventually find a place where he belonged, at the New England Center For Homeless Veterans, which has helped him work through many of the demons that can arise after a long military

SENNOTT continued on page 10



WHATS UP



Put the Lovemaking Back Into Religion

Shifra Freewoman Spare Change News

Time for new beginnings. It is time for a new beginning for me and for all of us. For the planet, for the country, for the world, for the children, for the animals, for the people, for the living and for the too many dead who are still with us.

Spring has already come and I know how much the earth is hurting, yet here is my prayer.

I want to pray to the living, loving embodied god, the living goddess. I want to pray to the dancing god

I want to pray to the sun and moon and stars, the earth herself, the mighty oceans, the streaming sun, pouring radiant light and life into us all.

I want to pray to the moon dancing and the falling stars and the milky way, the mother's breast the dancing dakinis, the heart within us all, the shining rivers and waterfall, the dark blessed night and the bright sun filled day that must and will shine in every heart and soul. I want to pray to prayer itself, to know god is the prayer and the one who prays. I want to pray to my broken heart and to the broken heart of all.

I want to pray to my soul, to my dancing feet and to the roots of trees, the dreds swinging from the heads of Africans.

I want to pray to the heart of Africa, the origin of humanity.

I want to pray to the certainty that human kind will learn to be kind and kindred and come to love the kindelelach, the children. That we will

all learn to love Africa and Africans and the embodied spirit knowledge intelligence of our African sisters and brothers, and that we will all together work to heal Africa, and that she will lead the way.

I want to pray that Arab will no longer be a dirty word, but that the dancing heart of her music will engulf us all. I want to pray that we Jews and Palestinians will come to pray together under a tallis and a kefiya wrapped together beneath a *huppah*, marriage canopy, that we will become one people with women leading the way to the open heart of god, that we will all rise to the sound of the muezzin, the haunting

the poems of Rumi, and a niggun-wordless melody, sung by all the middle east, the wordless melody that is in fact the breath of Allah herself the Nishmat Kol Chai, the breath-soul

I want to pray that Jew will no longer be a dirty word, that we will shed our shame and truly honor gods holy name by making peace with Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Syria and

call of prayer, the patterned beauty of Islamic art sung to

I pray that the goddess also makes love to the goddess and the male god to the male god as well. I pray for the end of hell for the coming of heaven on this

I also want to pray to the God that is known through the intuition the 6th sense, and the 12th sense, the unknowable yet knowable God.

I want to pray that we will be come embodiments of love, the love of the trees rooted and dancing their branches in our hearts to the music and musing of life itself, the fluted heart of god the Buddha with his big bellied bellowing laughter, the big bellied, gray haired laughing Santa Claus god clasping me to his breast howling and the old grandmother touching and stroking my hair saying, everything will be okay and my Aunt Marion holding me with so much love I cannot

And the soft breast of pussy willows caressing my face and the faces of children everywhere, the mothers breasts feeding them all. The earth seen as utterly and udderly sacred and sweet.

I want a god that is sweet to the taste and to the soul, a god I can make love to, like Jesus or Miriam the god wo/ man come to earth. I want an end to crucifixions and afflictions. I want us to stop worshiping a crucified god and to worship instead god giving birth to love itself, the holy of holies, being the vagina and womb.

> I want a god I can lovingly hold and sing to, making babies and joy. I want to be the embodied god himself

> > Green man and Ishtar and Oya and Shekhina and Innanna and Rachamaimah and Allah and Jesus and the laughing

I want to pray to the grass and to the people and and to the trees and the wind and the melting sunshine on my tongue and a goddess like Carol Burnett and Whoopee Goldberg and Angela Davis and the orthodox men and women I some-

times see on the streets on shabbes, the sabbath, when they worship the goddess without really knowing it. I want to know god like I know the face of a tree or a beloved friend like you know goodness and purity and great delicious holy lovemaking. I want to put the lovemaking back into religion.

I want to dance, daven, drummingpray to the living soul and soil of nature, adama the red earth, red with blood of life not the blood of slaughtered people.

I want to pray to the green earth, to the distant galaxies and the insects, pray to bugs and buses and bus drivers and poems. I want to pray to poetry. I want to be a poem offered up on the alter to god, yet be resurrected to dance and daven to shokel to sway, Torah in my arms and tefillin/phylacteries on my arms, tallis-prayer shawl covering me, covering all of us, praying naked to god ooh I feel the goddess dancing in my heart, ooh the goddess, I love the way you move me.

Let us be moved by this living loving God/dess. She insists that we share the Sacred Holy land of Israel/Palestine, let it be yours and mine.

Let peace come to the land like a lover. Let peace come to all lands and all people, let the trees be our steeples, peace with justice, just us, all of us, one world united under love.



all the rest of the middle east.

and the old ladv.







I pray to God to the dancing bull god, the shul god, God

I want an embodied god. A goddess that dances within

I pray that the dancing bull god and the wild god mother

the young and old man, God the child and the young woman

my body. I want a god I can taste and touch and smell and

feel and eat and see and come to know with my whole holy

I want a naked god, a naked self to dance with.

will come together as lovers once again.



Untitled

by Judy W

There was a man I used to know who came into my life. He was tall and strong, with long brown hair and a life filled up with strife.

He let his problems pile up until he couldn't see around the giant mess his life was now, and then it took him down.

He drank and smoked crack, shot dope, did lines. and then he would start again until one day he woke up alone with nobody by his side.

He lost his house, his wife, his kids and then he lost his mind. When he found out that he had HIV he partied 'till he was blind.

His friends and family tried to help him turn his life around. They sent him to a detox, then a halfway house he found.

His body and mind were sober and clean but still he couldn't see. The light at the end of the tunnel he sought would lead him straight to me.

I took him in, gave him a bed and food to make him strong. I showed him what friendship was all about and talked with him all night long.

He learned how to deal with life on his own, his anger, his hurt, his pride. but when it came to HIV he had no place to hide.

Feeding time: summer, '09

As long ago I learned to massage a man's need to pleasure myself, so in this off season summer year

hardly growing time, discovered the right soil can fabricate earth, and throwing food out a window to a stray cat trapped in a makeshift yard, flinging bread crumbs to the sparrows $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right) \left$ creates its own kind of fertile ground... watched the cat chase after the sparrows as my own, one I call Sam, let loose that tiger last winter leapt out of my neighbor's cat to protect her newborns from him; scared the hell out of me then & now...

I began to conceal what I did for one from the other, and forgetting how touching touches back, the way that works, my own hunger grown beyond feeling its pangs suddenly like a breath held dangerously long, burst out

The Tale of Lost Innocence

by Matthew Martinez

The risk of OD never crossed Joey's mind; until my brother's dead body was discovered, as the morning sun began to shine.

He called for me and I came running. Joey knew the risk of dying, and he held me in his hands smiling.

Unfortunately now addiction was his real best friend. And me, Matthew, I'm on my hands and knees crying.

or email: sparechangeeditor@gmail.com. SCN cannot return poetry

submissions, and authors will be contacted only if their poems are published.



Every Thursday

Every Saturday

671-354-5287

Squawk Coffeehouse, 9 pm

1555 Mass Ave., Cambridge

Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm

106 Prospect St., Cambridge

\$3-5 suggested donation.

Open mike for poets and musicians.

Poems may be submitted to: Marc D. Goldfinger, 76 Unity Ave. Belmont MA, 02478

Every Sunday

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Every Monday

Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm 106 Prospect St., Cambridge \$4 suggested donation. 617-354-5287

Every Wednesday Boston Poetry Slam, 8 pm Cantab Lounge, 738 Mass. Ave., Cambridge \$3. 21+. 617-354-2685

Second Thursday of Every Month Tapestry of Voices, 6:30 pm Borders, 10 School St., Boston Free. 617-557-7188

Second Tuesday of Every Month Newton Free Library, 7 pm 330 Homer St. 617-796-1360

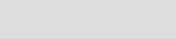
Third Saturday of Every Month

Boston Haiku Society meeting, 2-6 pm Kaji Aso Studio, 40 St. Stephen St., Boston \$3.617-247-1719

Poetry event listings may be submitted to sceditor@homelessempowerment.org







lacktriangle

Voices From The Streets

Voices from the Streets - a forum for those whose voices are too often ignored. From narratives to opinion to advice, these writers portray a unique perspective on life that might otherwise go unnoticed. Below, find that turning an ear towards those normally silenced opens the door to understanding and relating to those who have faced life on the street.

Tales of the Troll: The Accident (Part Two)



Marc D. Goldfinger Spare Change

This story is a continuation of the previously run "Empty Bed in My Cell" series. "The Accident" and other segments to follow are all chapters in a complete novella entitled, "Tales of the Troll: Junkies, Angels & Demons"

Goldfinger Unleashed I'm not saying that there is no such thing as a solid reality. (The reader may remember that I had previously alluded to questioning this concept). Really, what I mean to say is that all we get to go on is a construct of reality filtered to us through our nervous systems. These have been altered, muddled,

and distorted by others and by experiences since the day we were born.

Such thoughts bring me to Cowboy. The man knew his own version of reality but fate cast him into another, stranger, more alien reality than what he ever dreamed existed. Though he fancied himself a real Clint Eastwood-type, he had never travelled farther west than Olean, New York. The only use he had for cows was gathering hallucinogenic mushrooms from their pasture pies. As for horses, it was his opinion that the only thing with brains that was born to be ridden was a woman.

Cowboy was born into a drinking family. Motorcycles, alcohol, drugs, and fast women—these were his passions. Riding the iron horse was his life. Everything else came second. His bikes were fast and powerful. When he was drinking he didn't like to stop for traffic lights—he was usually so loaded that he'd fall when the natural moving balance of the motorcycle ceased.

When the Cowboy was young he learned from the men in his family. His knowledge of romance and sex was more Neanderthal than human. By the time he reached age 19, the Cowboy had essentially learned that foreplay was letting three of his friends have her first while he finished the case of beer.

Sascha changed all that. He met her at a bar in Hillsboro, New Hampshire called Tomachhio's when he was thirty-one years old. He had just finished drinking a shot of Jack with a beer back when she walked in.

In Italy they say that every man and every woman has the perfect partner and when that person walks into their life, it is as if they are struck by a thunderbolt. Cowboy had never heard that story. It didn't matter. He was struck when she walked in.

In that moment everything changed for both of them. They drank, they danced, they went home together.

* * *

Two years later that car came out of nowhere. But let's back up a little. Sascha pressed the sweetness of herself into Cowboy's back as they rode. Sometimes she dropped her hands into the wind and just leaned back into the sissy bar as the wind tied her hair into a beauteous explosion of crazed knots. On this particular day, she reached around him with both arms, slid her hands under his shirt and eased them down, low under his belt.

Cowboy was heated by her love. Three days ago—a Saturday night—he had been out drinking with his cohort. At 3AM Sunday morning he remembered that he had told Sascha that he was com-

ing home directly from work. He had closed the flea market stand in Derry at 5PM with all intentions of heading right home when Sprockett and Toad stopped by. The two went out for what was supposed to be one beer.

Ten hours later (one hell of a lot sooner than the time he had gone out for a beer in January of '81 and returned in April of that same year with the explanation that he had lost track of time, in addition to a small police matter) he kicked the front door in, a little drunk still, threw his leather on the couch in the living room and walked into the kitchen. Sascha was sitting at the kitchen table reading a book.

She looked up at him with those eyes that made him dizzier than one fifth of Johnny Walker Black.

"What's the problem?" he asked.

She smiled. "No problem except for the front door."

"Well, I had to get in and if you hadn't locked \ldots "

"Cowboy. I stopped locking the door eight months ago. This is the fifth time you've kicked it in when all you had to do was turn the doorknob."

"Wow. I forgot again."

She smiled. "I'll put a steak on for you while you put plastic over the opening. I made salad too and we have some Bleu cheese dressing."

Cowboy didn't really know what to say so he went into the living room, closed the fresh air conduit he had opened, and then he went back to the kitchen and sat. He watched Sascha move around the room. He couldn't take it anymore and went to her.

Afterwards they are steak and salad. Then they went to bed. Later they went to sleep.

48 hours later the car came out of nowhere.

* * *

Cowboy attempted to lay the bike down. It was too close, everything was moving too fast, and it was just too damned late.

When the sound finally stopped the world lay twisted on asphalt. Cowboy raised himself from a tangle of weeds on the side of the road. A car engine roared, then faded as it vanished around the first curve, dipped down over the rise and was gone. Silence.

The first thing he saw was the bent motorcycle. Then he saw her. Sascha lay near the bike, twisted, broken, silent. There was a growing pool spilling from her cranium. Splintered bone protruded from her right leg. No movement except for the growing stain under her head. A high pitched whine scraped the air all around him as his black leather boots pounded the dark pitch road. It was not until he reached her side that he realized the sound was coming from his open mouth.

If sound equaled wind, the trees would have been torn from the ground by his cry and every nearby cloud would have been ripped out of the sky. Black spaces would have appeared where the blue should have been.

Sudden death is darkness like a knife puncturing the illusory veil of light within which our reality dwells. Denial and horror are the children borne of the rapid sweep of the scythe. Cowboy was a tree rooted to the road looking down at his loved one. The summer of his life skipped autumn and roared into winter.

Marc D. Goldfinger is a formerly homeless vendor who is now housed. He can be reached at: junkietroll@yahoo.com

tales from the curb



James Shearer Spare Change News

A Message for the Black Community

ast week in another newspaper, a series of articles ran that discussed gay marriage from both sides of the aisle. Though I was originally skeptical, it turned out to be really interesting. One thing that especially stood out for me in the series was an article about a young black man, alienated from his family, friends, and community because he was gay. The following day a really nasty letter to the editor was published. It essentially proclaimed that being gay was only for white people.

To the person who wrote that inane letter, you should know that white folks don't have exclusive rights to being gay—in fact, no racial group does. That statement you made is as ignorant as the misnomer of AIDS as a gay disease. No my uneducated friend, people come in all sizes, shapes, colors, and sexual orientations and it's about time that you and the rest of the black community got with the program. I find it truly tragic that many black men and woman are afraid to come out and be themselves because they fear being ostracized from their community. If there is anyone who thinks I'm making this up, go to the next gay pride day or to a rally, and then tell me how many black faces you see.

What's worse is that there are people in the black community who would back gay marriage, but they too are afraid of being ostracized for their advocacy. So how do I explain the fact that I'm a black man who so strongly backs gay marriage? Really, for me it's a non-issue. I mean when it comes down to it who do same-sex marriages hurt? I speak with people all the time who tell me it's wrong, but they can't give me even one clear-cut reason why. Of course at some point they inject God into the conversation, and that's when I begin to yawn and walk away.

As I've written before, I have a cousin who is gay. He came out before it was fashionable, and yes our family shunned him. But I for one

SHEARER continued on page 10







Living to Learn: Life in a Group Home

Amanda Morley Spare Change News

I live in a group home funded by the department of mental health. After the administration takes away 65% of my income each month to pay for my rent and food and other expenses, I am left with \$225 from my social security check to use for personal spending. This amount quickly disappears into bills for my cell phone and medication, which are quite expensive. As an energetic 28 year old, I like to have at least some fun—maybe the occasional night out with friends. Yet my tight budget often makes any extra expense impossible.

The house I live in is designed around training. There are eight women who live there, and all of them (I believe) have the diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. This psychiatric issue is complex and is only just beginning to be understood on by experts in the field. On weekdays, we are required to be out of the house by 9am and are not allowed back until 2pm. While living in the house, members must participate in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), a very intricate and exhaustive type of intervention, or else be expelled. DBT takes place, for most of us, at the Massachusetts Mental Heath Center at the Shattuck Hospital in

Jamaica Plain. It's a rigorous program that takes five hours a day, five days a week. Participants are required to be present for three out of four 45-minute groups (with a one hour lunch break in between) four days a week, or risk getting placed "in the red". Two weeks "in the red", and one risks getting kicked out. It sounds pretty harsh, but it is actually one of the best programs in the state, if not the country, and easily the most "affiliative" (a word we use a lot in DBT) that I've been to.

While living in the group home we are ideally taught invaluable skills which will prepare us for independent life. I see the truth in this vision, but the reality is that we are forced to take on all responsibilities by ourselves with no help from staff professionals. But I don't want to blow up the building. I want to tell you how I want to rebuild it. The system that I am currently living under needs change. The house that I currently live in needs change.

Babies need help to be potty trained. They also cannot be expected to live up to the expectations of functioning in underwear when they are at the developmental stage of being in diapers. I, like those babies, am in the same boat. I need help to get to where I am going, but I cannot be expected to get there by myself. I am not at the stage where

I can "go it alone". After all, isn't that what the staff at a group home is there for? To help people like me to learn and grow? Ideally, the staff would be there to assist in interpersonal conflicts between members of the house, and also be there for moral support and general guidance when needed. Instead, they too often say, "Do it on your own. You'll have to grow up someday, it might as well be today".

The director of the house in which I live is a social worker with a distant management style. Often, when members of the house community are in conflict with one another and have already attempted to resolve the problem themselves, to no avail, they will go to the director for help. She typically rebounds right back at them and tells them to go and talk to the person with whom they are in struggle. I agree with the message behind this answer, but it seems that sometimes the director hasn't thought out the problem fully, and simply refuses to help.

A common scenario involves the poor girl who is in crisis and coming for help. The girl in crisis has already approached the housemate and is at a stalemate with her. At this point she needs help from a higher power yet she is turned away, intervention refused. It's just not right. Another example. One evening at community meeting the director commented that "you can go and drink

yourselves to death, cut yourselves, throw vourselves out the window or in front of a train and I have no control whatsoever" Well, I understand that, at the end of the day, she really does have no control over another human being. But, on the other hand, she can help us by encouraging us to use our skills, calling to our attention problem behaviors and turning our direction in another path, suggesting coaching calls to therapists, and even putting us in the hospital if direly necessary. With all those options, it seems to me like she does have some control, and even if she doesn't feel like she does, it would be nice if she could act like she did, just to create an atmosphere of mastery within the house. This is the place where I live. This is where I grow. This is where I learn. Shouldn't it feel comfortable and safe?

The staff often says to me, "Amanda, you won't be in this house forever." I know that. But let me take advantage of the help that I can get while I'm here. I want to live for the experience, to savor every moment, to get everything I can out of my time here. I know that someday I will move on. But that day is not today. So let today be a day of help and support from those who are there to help me while I'm here.

Benefits of a Broccoli-Rich Diet

Robert SondakSpare Change News

A low calorie, high fiber, and low fat vegetable, broccoli is an excellent food for women and men on the go. As a cool weather vegetable that grows best in an average daily temperature between 65 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit, broccoli grows well in New England and is available year round here. Broccoli (from the Italian piccoli bracci, meaning "little arms") is part of the cabbage family, Brassicaceae or Cruciferae. It is classified as in a cultivated group of species of the Brassica oleracera family native to the coast of southern and western Europe.

Broccoli has a long and rich history dating back several thousand years. These vegetables were originally cultivated in Italy and Asia Minor during the Roman Empire. The Roman philosopher Phiny the Elder mentioned broccoli in his writing. Thomas Jefferson was one of the first Americans to highlight broccoli in his garden notes in the mid 1760's. Nevertheless, broccoli remained an exotic plant in American gardens for well over 150 years. It was not until the early 1920's that the D'Arrigo Brothers planted a trial broccoli crop in the San Jose Valley. The brothers' business boomed over the next two decades and the "Andy Boy" brand was born. Since then, broccoli has developed a reputation as a divisive vegetable, famously scorned by children and some adults, but adored by others. The broccoli debate has reached the highest levels of American society; President George H. W. Bush had it removed from the Air Force One menu.

Meanwhile, President Clinton advocated for broccoli, putting it back on the White House menu while in office.

In contemporary Boston, broccoli can be located in various forms at all major food retailers as well as Haymarket and the local farmers' markets. Star/Shaws sells fresh organic and commercial, as well as frozen broccoli. The Market Basket in Union Square sells both commercial and frozen broccoli. The Harvest Coop Market and Whole Foods sell fresh organic and commercial, and also frozen broccoli. Star is the only local Cambridge food store that carries in-season local commercial broccoli, which comes from Maine. The farmers markets meanwhile carry locally grown broccoli from Parker Farms (Somerville/Union Square and Cambridge/Central Square), Stillmans Farm (Cambridgeport), and Dicks Market Garden (Cambridge/Central Square). Haymarket's broccoli is usually from California and Arizona the major producing states. In the summer look for organic broccoli at the reasonable price of 2 pounds of florets with one large stalk for \$1.50 each.

There are three commonly grown types of broccoli. The most familiar type is something called calabrese in the UK, which is what we know as "broccoli" in North America. It has a large green head usually 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch wide with medium sized stalks. Sprouting broccoli has a large number of heads with thin stalks. It is planted in May to be harvested in the winter or early the following year in temperate climates. Romanesco broccoli has a distinctive fractal appearance to its heads. It is usually

yellow-green in color and generally tastes slightly bitter.

Broccoli is a low calorie food, with only 40 calories per 1/2 cup serving. The same serving size contains 6 grams of carbohydrates and 2.75 grams protein. Broccoli is also a major source of other important nutrients. It contains high levels of vitamin C, K and pro-vitamin A (beta-carotene). Interestingly, a single serving of broccoli provides 80 to 120mg of vitamin C versus 50mg for a medium sized orange. For people tired of carrots, broccoli is a good alternate source of beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant that is recognized as a cancer fighting vitamin.

Other health benefits of broccoli have been highlighted over the past decade by the United States Department of Agriculture and the National Institute of Health working in conjunction with scientists and medical doctors. For example, the high fiber content of raw salad or cooked broccoli can facilitate the cleansing of the digestive system. These vegetables are also an excellent source of a family of anti-cancer phytochemicals called isothiocyantes. Isothiocyantes fight cancer by neutralizing carcinogens, malicious cancer-causing agents. They do this by reducing poisonous effects and stimulating the release of killer cells that remove these harmful compounds from the body.

Broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables contain high levels of another phytochemical called sulforphane. Sulforphane increases the activation of phase 2 enzymes, which are believed to reduce the risk of prostate cancer. According to research conducted by the Department of Urology at Stanford

University published in the journal Cancer Epidemiology and Prevention, sulforphane is the most potent phase 2 enzyme known to

For all of its nutritional complexity, broccoli is easy to prepare. The health benefits of broccoli can be maximized by steaming or sautéing it. Research has shown that the more processing or boiling this vegetable undergoes, the lesser the health benefits in terms of the phytonutrients, so the less cooked the better. Broccoli can be added to many staple dishes, such as pasta primavera or rice pilaf. If you are not a vegetarian, steamed broccoli can be used to accompany chicken, baked salmon or salmon salad. Broccoli is an excellent side dish or soup ingredient for young children. Steaming broccoli florets usually takes 4 to 5 minutes while the stalks need 5 to 6 minutes. Microwaving frozen packages of broccoli takes 16 minutes and fresh broccoli with cheese takes 12 to 17 minutes depending on the serving size. I recommend Bella On Line for cooking instructions to microwave broccoli.

I made sautéed broccoli at a Harvest Food Pantry food demonstration in 2008. I prepared the broccoli with sliced peppers along with black peppers and a pinch of orange juice. I learned how not to overcook it and to let it cool before handing out samples. I also prepared steamed broccoli as part of a Sunday lunch for clients and staff at the Ruby Rogers Advocacy and Mental Health Center in 2007. I let it cool and then added freshly squeezed lemon. Prepared this way, the broccoli had an excellent taste and flavor, which made its many nutritional benefits all the more enjoyable.

Robert Sondak is a Spare Change News vendor and writer.



SENNOTT continued from page 5

career. "I go to therapy every week to deal with post traumatic stress disorder and bipolar disorder," Griffin said of when he began dealing with his post military issues. "When I first got to the shelter was the first time I ever addressed any of those issues."

Though Griffin admits he did experiment with drugs and alcohol shortly after his tour of duty in Vietnam, he says never developed drug or alcohol dependencies, and has not been a regular drinker since his mid 20's. "I don't have a drug or alcohol problem," Griffin said. "I haven't drank since I was 24-25. I mean I can go to a party or a club and have a drink, but usually two drinks is my limit, and that's very rarely."

During his time at the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans Griffin has witnessed many of the obstacles that can prevent his peers from working their way out of their various situations, as well as many of the misconceptions that mainstream society has about these individuals. "What most people don't realize is like at the homeless shelter over half those guys that are in that shelter are working." Griffin said. "They have jobs, they are working. They [just] don't earn enough money that they can live off of, and that could be for a number of reasons. You have guys that are paying back child support; guys that have had, or do have still drug and alcohol problems. Some of those are service connected.

Along with the New England Center for Homeless Veterans, Bunker Hill Community College also became a place of new beginning for Griffin. When asked about how he ended up where he is today, Griffin acknowledged the role of chance. "Well, I don't know. I just ended up in Boston, and I was at the homeless shelter there and they had this program they called the Upward Bound Program, which is to help veterans get started into college," Griffin said. "I went into that program just for something to do. That kind of snowballed into getting me into college and thinking about doing something."

While Griffin has seen many ups and downs in his life, he is now enjoying a period of positive personal growth. Griffin is currently completing his second year at Bunker Hill Community College and is close to graduating with an associates' degree in social sciences.

"Half the reason I do it is just to keep myself healthy, you know, mentally. You know, because I know the worst thing for me is to be idle," Griffin said of how he is overcoming personal issues through education. "Because then I start getting depressed and I start getting back into that self-destructive mode where I just don't care anymore.'

During his time at Bunker Hill, Griffin has had a lasting effect on the school and his professors. Aurora Bautista, Professor of Cultural Anthropology said of Griffin that "His individual project which was a service learning project, gave him the opportunity

to share with the class about the issues facing veterans as well as experience of homeless individuals in society." She continued with praise for Griffin, "His willingness to share his experience was both touching and of course encouraging to students as he clearly demonstrated through his sharing how resilience is key to survival and the role of education in furthering his goals."

Along with completing the core classes necessary for graduation, Griffin has also taken full advantage of the many opportunities Bunker Hill has to offer, including becoming a member of the Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society, and re-establishing the Veterans Club.

"Rather then try to cram it all into one semester I said well I will just break it down and do two more semesters." Griffin said, describing his decision to spread his remaining courses over a longer period of time. "That's why, now, I am getting more involved with student activities," Griffin said. "You know, the Honors Society, and the Mentoring Program. Now I am running for student government."

While Griffin is involved in many domains of campus life, his efforts to reestablish the Veterans Club comprise one of his proudest and most difficult achievements. "I am trying to get the Veterans Club going. I have been struggling with that this semester, trying to get it re-established," Griffin said. "On record I've got 14 members, but I've got like four guys that are actually

attending the meetings, you know, actually doing anything active in the club. But it's a

Griffin explained his work with fellow veterans through the club, stating, "I thought about restarting it because I believe that veterans need to have a voice," he said. "It's like I preach to the veterans, that if we're ever going to do anything we've got to do it for ourselves. We can't stand there with our hands out just expecting people to do stuff for us just because we're veterans. We need to organize, as an organization so that we have a political voice.'

Although Griffin has not yet decided what four-year school he plans to attend after Bunker Hill, he will certainly continue to make an impact on the educational community as he strives toward his goal of working in the Department of Veteran Affairs. "That's my goal. I want to work in the VA system, working with veterans," Griffin said. "I think there needs to be more programs for veterans to help them restablish themselves once they get out of the military. Not like me, I mean when I got out of the Army I was kind of on my own to re-establish myself in the community."

Griffin has been through a lot in his life, but when he reminisces, it is with no regrets. "I am not ashamed of myself or anything I have ever done," Griffin said. "I have always tried to do the right things and be a good person."



Nutrition & Health Series Broccoli and Peppers

Broccoli is an excellent source of Vitamin C and Calcium.

- Broccoli is rich in indoles a phytochemical that helps fight breast cancer in women.
- Vitamin C aids in muscular development and maintenance of the lungs.
- Calcium is necessary for healthy bones and teeth, and helps your blood to clot.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes **COOKING TIME:** 15 minutes

- 1 red pepper, seeded cored and sliced 1 pound broccoli (frozen or fresh) 2 tablespoons oil
- - 1 sliced lemon
- 2 scallions thinly sliced
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup orange juice





Total Servings 4 82 Calories per serving 1 grams carbohydrates 3 grams fat 2 3/4 grams protein



- 2. Sliced red bell peppers into thin slices.
- 3. Place broccoli and sliced bell pepper in a steamer over boiling water, 8 to 12 minutes
- 4. In a sauce pan, melt the butter and add sliced lemon, scallions, orange juice and black
- 5. Cook until scallions are tender.
- 6. Pour lemon sauce over broccoli and red sliced pepper.

CALORIE GUIDE

1 tablespoon margarin/butter 100 calories 1/2 cup orange 55 calories

DIET NOTES

One serving of vegetables: 1/2 Cup (4 ounces) cooked vegetables

FOOD EXCHANGE LIST One serving Broccoli equals:

1/2 cup vegetables or 1 vegetable exchange 1 teaspoon oil or 1 1/2 fat exchange

SHEARER continued from page 8

accepted him as he was. To this day when I go to New York he is the only family member I visit other than my brother. I've been homeless so I know for myself what being ostracized feels like. I walk to the beat of my own drum. As a black man I also know what it's like to be judged by something that I can't change no matter what my skin color.

Which brings me to my next point. How can the black community stand side by side these people protesting gay marriage when they are the same bigoted losers that wouldn't let our grandparents use the same bathrooms as them? Who put up signs at water fountains, restaurants, schools, signs that said no colored folks allowed? Did you know that in the south where I was born there was actually a law that fined white hospitals for allowing black mothers to give birth on their premises? Since these hospitals had to forge birth records to avoid paying fines, my birth record says I'm White.

The people who we stand with when we protest gay marriage are among the same people who threw rocks at busloads of black school children not so long ago. I wouldn't even protest a virus with these people. Make no mistake: the target may be new, but these are the same people who did not want to give our people any rights. Anyone from the black community who stands with these losers should be ashamed. And yes the gay rights movement is about civil rights.

So my message to the black community is this: look at the people you are standing with in protest. Listen to what words are used—arguments to preserve the "sanctity of marriage"—these are the same phrases thrown around to protest interracial marriage in the 60's. If you are a person of color, just walk away from the debate. Instead, let's join with our gay brothers and sisters.









Helping Hands

Cambridge and Boston are teeming with organizations ready to provide food and services to the homeless and the needy. If you're in need, they're there for you. If you can volunteer or donate, most of them could use your help.

Food

DAILY MEALS:

444 Harrison Ave. Boston, 617-482-4944

Breakfast: 6 a.m.; brown bag lunches during the day;

Dinner: 5 p.m.; Chicken truck: 11:30 a.m. Rosie's Place (women & children only, no boys over age 11)

889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322

 $Lunch: 11:30 \ a.m.-1 \ p.m.; Dinner: 4:30 \ p.m.-7 \ p.m.$

39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211

Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Emergency sandwiches: Weekdays 2:45 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400 Women's Lunch Place (women & children only, no boys over

age 14, male presence discouraged) 67 Newbury St., Boston., 617-267-0200

Open Mon. - Sat., 7 a.m. -- 2p.m. www.womenslunchplace.org

WEEKLY MEALS

Monday:

Church of the Holy Resurrection

64 Harvard Ave., Allston, 617-787-7625 6 p.m. - 7 p.m. and take-out.

Mass. Ave. Baptist Church

146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853

6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday:

Church of the Advent

30 Brimmer St., Boston, 617-523-2377

First Parish Unitarian Church

 $3\,Church\,St.,\,Cambridge,\,617\text{-}876\text{-}7772$ 6~p.m.-7~p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)

Faith Kitchen, Faith Lutheran Church

311 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-354-0414

6:30 p.m. (second & last Tuesday of every month)

Wednesday:

Salvation Army

402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400

5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Thursday: Christ Church

Zero Garden St. Cambridge, 617-876-0200

St. James Church

1191 Mass. Ave, Cambridge

The Women's Meal (Women and children welcome)

Union Baptist Church 874 Main St., Cambridge, 617-864-6885 5 p.m

Friday:

Arlington St. Church

351 Boylston St., Boston, 617-536-7050

Food Not Bombs

Boston Common (near Park St. T station), 617-522-8277

2:30 p.m. -- 5 p.m. Mass. Ave. Baptist Church

146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853

FOOD ASSISTANCE

Greater Boston Food Bank

617-427-5200

Serves non-profit organizations such as

agencies, shelters, etc. Office hours: 8 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.

Proiect Bread

617-723-5000; Hotline 1-800-645-8333

Referrals to food pantries throughout the city

Somerville Food Pantry

Food pantry: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Wed 12 p.m.

-- 4 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m. -- 4 p.m.

Somerville residents only. Those unable to use other pantries due to disability may call and ask for the Project Soup Delivery Coordinator.

Brookline Food Panry

15 St. Paul St., Brookline, 617-566-4953

Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sat. 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Brookline residents only. Second-time visitors must present a letter from an advocate confirming that they are in need of food services.

CEOC (Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission) 11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge, 617-868-2900

Food pantry: Mon, Wed 4 p.m. -- 6 p.m.; Tue 12 p.m. -- 2

p.m.; Thu 11 a.m. -- 1 p.m.; Closed Fri.

105 Spring St., Cambridge, 617-876-4444

Food pantry: Tue 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Offers assistance in filling out food stamp applications (call

for appointment). Margaret Fuffer Houses

71 Cherry St., Cambridge, 617-547-4680

Food pantry: Wed. 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

& 6 p.m. -- 7:30 p.m.; Fri & Sat 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m.

Pentecostal Tabernacle Church

Food pantry by appointment only; no deliveries or walkins; referrals to other food pantries

402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400 Cambridge and Somerville residents only.

Food pantry: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. & by appointment

St. Francis House

39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211

Food pantry: Mon. - Fri. 10 a.m. -- 11 a.m. Sign up at the Counseling Desk in the St. Francis House

Day Center

St. James Church

1191 Mass. Ave, Cambridge

Food pantry: Tues. 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; Thurs. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.;

Sat. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

St. John the Evangelist

35 Bowdoin St., Boston, 617-723-5800

Food pantry: Wed. 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

85 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, 617-661-1110

St. Paul's Ame Church

Food pantry: Wed. 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Western Ave. Baptist Church

 $299\,Western\,Ave., Cambridge, 617\text{-}661\text{-}0433$ Food pantry: Every second Wed., 10 a.m.

Zinberg Clinic Pantry at Cambridge Hospital 617-665-1606 For clinic patients with HIV / AIDS only. Food pantry: Mon. -- Fri. 9 a.m. -- 5 p.m.

Homeless Concerns

Cambridge Multi-Service Center

19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-349-6340

City-run agency with additional community non-profit partners. Works with Cambridge families in shelters, provides shelter referrals and other housing assistance. Employs housing specialists for elderly and disabled.

Office hours: Mon. 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Tue., Wed., Thu. 8:30 $\,$ a.m. -- 5 p.m.; Fri. 8:30 a.m. -- 12 p.m. Walk-ins accepted. Cardinal Medeiros Center

25 Isabella St., Boston, 617-619-6960

Day center for homeless adults (50 years & older); mental health & nursing staff; help with housing searches. Lunch served at 11:45 a.m.

Office hours: Mon. - Thu. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

240 Albany St., Cambridge, 617-661-0600 Open 24 hrs/day; emergency shelter open 4:30 p.m. – 8

a.m.: Clients who leave in the morning may not return until 3 p.m.; Clients staying multiple nights must prove

recent local residency. CLASP (Community Legal Assistance Services Project)

19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-552-0623 Free legal clinic for Cambridge homeless at the Multi-

Service Center every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. Ecclesia Ministries

Weekly Schedule for the Common Cathedral:

67 Newbury Street, Boston., 617-552-0623

- Worship at Brewer's Fountain on Boston Common, 1 pm - Gospel Reflection at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St.,

- Lunch at Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 11:30 a.m. -- 1

-Eucharist & Healing (St. Paul's Cathedral) 1 p.m. - Common Fellowship in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2 p.m. -- 3 p.m.

- Common Art at the Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury

Street, 10 a.m. -- 3 p.m.

- Common Cinema in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral)

2:30 p.m. -- 5 p.m.

Horizons for Homeless Children 617-445-1480; www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Horizons for Homeless Children is seeking volunteers to interact and play with children living in family, teen parent, and domestic violence shelters in Greater Boston. We offer daytime and evening shifts, so there is likely to be one that fits your schedule. A commitment of 2 hours a week for 6 months is required. The next training session will be Sat.,

Medical Walk-in Unit at Mass General Hospital

617-726-2707

Provides minor medical care for adults. Patients are seen in order of arrival. MGH accepts most insurances but requires Hours of Operation: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m. -- 8 p.m.; Sat.,

Sun., Holidays 9:30 a.m. -- 4 p.m.; closed Thanksgiving &

889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322 Women and children only (no boys over age 11)

Open 7 days a week; provides help with housing, medical care, job training, financial aid and education, legal services, rape crisis counselors, health specialists, and more.

St. Francis House

39 Boylston Street, Boston, 617-542-4211

Meals offered 365 days/yr.; food pantry open weekdays. Offers a mailroom, open art studio, clothing lottery, computer library, support groups such as AA, showers, telephones, toothbrushes & razors, medical clinic, counseling & mental health services, housing counseling & stabilization services, & a women's center.

For more details on these services and for their specific times visit www.stfrancishouse.org

Starlight Ministries

617-262-4567

Outreach van with food, clothing, blankets and worship Hours: Wed. 8 p.m. by Park Street T station on the Boston Common; Thu. 8 p.m. in the pit in Harvard Square

The Women's Center 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807

Computers, kitchen and rooms. Walk-ins welcome.

Women & children only (no boys over age 16). Hours: Mon-Fri 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., Sat 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

341 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-497-7968 Women only. Home-base during the day and advocacy services

Open six days/week. First-time visitors,

call ahead or stop by Mon-Sat, 8-2pm.

Short and long-term residential substance use disorder treatment programs for individuals and families; affordable housing opportunities for eligible individuals; HIV/ call for more information. (617) 541-0222 ext. 626

























HIV testing and prevention resources

LOCAL NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

You can get Hepatitis C and HIV from sharing needles or works. The Hep C and HIV virus are transmitted through blood. When you use needles to do drugs, there's always blood around, even if you can't see it.

There are many things you can do to avoid infection of these viruses. Having your own clean area for fixing is a good way to start. Use a newspaper or magazine to put your stuff on. Don't touch or use anyone else's stuff. Have your own needle, water, cooker, matches, lighter, tie, filter and whatever else you normally use. It's best not to share any of these things, but if you have to share a needle, clean it with bleach and water first. (Bleach kits can be found at many area community health centers and public service agencies.)

Step 1. Flush the needle with water 3 times.

Step 2. Draw bleach into the needle and shake for 30 seconds. (Bleach does not kill the Hepatitis C virus. Bleach does kill the HIV virus.)

Step 3. Flush the needle again with clean water.

Repeat these 3 steps 3 times.

Wash your hands and injection sites before and after you fix. This helps to stop you from getting infected with bacteria. Use any kind of soap, and rinse well.

You can buy clean needles at any Massachusetts pharmacy. All you need is an ID and enough money to pay for the needles. Or go to a needle exchange program to get clean needles and other equipment.

BOSTON

Boston's needle exchange program, run by AHOPE.

Note: If the van is not at the scheduled site, look for needle exchange program staff on foot, or call toll-free (1-800-383-2437) for information about other exchanges.

Contact: Adam Butler (617) 534-3963

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge's needle exchange program is run by Cambridge Cares About AIDS (CAA).

Location:

Cambridge Cares About AIDS Drop-In Center 17 Sellers Street, Central Square, Cambridge (off Mass Ave., past YMCA, across from City Hall).

Times

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday: 10:00am - 6:00pm

Tuesday: 12pm - 6:00pm

Contact: Eliza Wheeler

Cambridge Needle Exchange Coordinator

Cambridge Cares About AIDS

17 Sellers Street

Cambridge, MA 02139 Weekdays M, W, R, F: 10am to 6pm, T:

12pm to 6pm

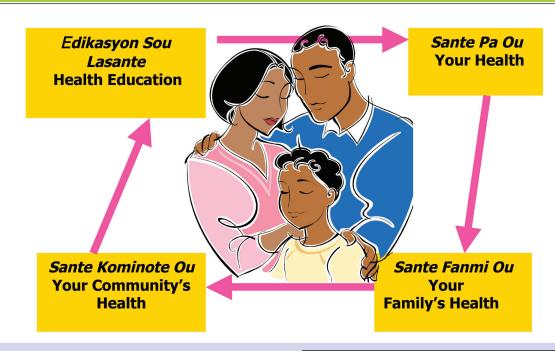
Direct Line: (617) 599-0219 Needle Exchange: (617) 599-0246

Fax: (617) 661-2853

Email: ewheeler@ccaa.org

Boston Medical Center

Yon Jou Edikasyon sou Lasante pou Ayisyen A Health Education Day for Haitians



Mèkredi 24 Jen, 2009 Wednesday, June 24th, 2009 10am to 2pm Boston University School of Medicine Hiebert Room, 14th floor 72 East Concord Street Boston, MA 02118 (Near Boston Medical Center) Nap ofri tès sa yo/we are offering these tests:

- Sik/Blood Glucose
- Tansyon/Blood Pressure
- · H/\
- Referans si ou vle wè doktè/ Referral to see doctor
- Referans pou asirans/ Referral for insurance

Bon Mizik Kreyol ak yon ti goute/Good Creole Music and Refreshments!

Pou plis enfòmasyon, rele/for more Information, Contact:

Dee Pamphile, Health Educator

Boston Medical Center

Phone: 617-414-7057 Email: dee.pamphile@bmc.org



